In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1.   (Amended)   An image processing method for carrying out image processing on an image including a figure, the image processing method comprising the steps of:

extracting a face area of the figure from the image; and

adjusting at least one of density and/or color of the face area based on density information and/or color information, respectively, of an area surrounding the face area.

2.   (Amended)   An image processing apparatus for carrying out image processing on an image including a figure, the image processing apparatus comprising:

face area extracting means for extracting a face area of the figure from the image; and

adjusting means for adjusting at least one of density and/or color of the face area, based on density information and/or color information, respectively, of an area surrounding the face area.

3.   (Amended)   A computer-readable recording medium storing a program to cause a computer to execute a method of carrying out

image processing on an image including a figure, the program comprising the procedures of:

extracting a face area of the figure from the image; and

adjusting at least one of density and/or color of the face area based on density information and/or color information, respectively, of an area surrounding the face area.

Please add the following claims:

--4. (New) An image processing apparatus for carrying out image processing on an image including a figure, the image processing apparatus comprising:

a face area extractor extracting a face area of the figure from the image; and

an adjustor adjusting at least one of density and/or color of the face area, based on density information and/or color information, respectively, of an area surrounding the face area.

5.   (New) The image processing method of claim 1, further comprising:

designating an area surrounding the face area as a concentric area excluding the face area.

6.   (New) The image processing method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining the area surrounding the face area such that the area surrounding the face area has a radius of 3 times a radius of the face area.

7.   (New) The image processing method of claim 1, further comprising:

dividing the surrounding area into sub areas; and

calculating an average pixel density of each sub area.

8.   (New) The image processing method of claim 1, further comprising:

calculating density and/or color information of the area surrounding the face.

9.   (New) An image processing method for carrying out image processing on an image including a figure, the image processing method comprising the steps of:

extracting a flesh area of the figure from the image; and

adjusting at least one of density and/or color of the flesh area based on density information and/or color information, respectively, of an area surrounding the flesh area.--

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